

 <p>Green Mountain National Forest</p>	 <p>Finger Lakes National Forest</p>	<p>Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests</p> <p><i>For Immediate Release</i></p> <p>Thursday, September 1, 2011</p>
<p>News Release</p>		<p>Contact: Ethan Ready 802-747-6760</p>
<p><i>Caring for the Land and Serving People</i></p>		

GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST CLOSED TEMPORARILY

USFS CITES PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS

RUTLAND, VT. Due to the extensive damage caused by Hurricane Irene, the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) has been closed temporarily. Under the authority of an Act of Congress dated, June 4, 1897 and pursuant to the Secretary of Agriculture's Regulations, Colleen Madrid, Forest Supervisor for the Green Mountain National Forest, issued an order to close the GMNF this afternoon. The order prohibits the public from going into or being upon any part of the Green Mountain National Forest, until further notice.

With Labor Day weekend fast approaching, the U.S. Forest Service wants to emphasize that public health and safety is of utmost concern. "We are working diligently to assess conditions across the Forest and moving to recovery to get the Forest open as safely and quickly as we can," said Madrid. Forest Service chain-saw crews will be working through the holiday weekend to clear roads and trails and other crews will continue to assess the condition of bridges and other facilities that have been impacted by the recent storm.

The GMNF asks that the public cancel forest visits until damage has been assessed, potential hazards have been addressed, and the closure order has been withdrawn. Violation of closure order prohibitions can result in hefty fines or imprisonment. Any federal, state, or local officer or a member of any organized rescue or fire fighting force in the performance of an official duty is exempt from the closure order.

People interested in camping and / or hiking opportunities elsewhere in Vermont should visit:
www.vtstateparks.com

For the most current information on the status of the closure order and progress on restoring access to roads, bridges, recreational facilities, and trails on the Green Mountain National Forest, please visit our website at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/greenmountain/htm/greenmountain/g_home.htm

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